

This I believe

The power of words is unfathomable. It is abstract and never truly defined, but I believe in it.

When I was much younger, my mother would read to me. It was an activity we participated in nightly for as long as I could remember. I would sit on her soft lap as she read me anything she could find – usually nursery rhymes and children's poetry with the occasional newspaper. The words never made much sense to me in the beginning, but the sound of her voice soothed me.

Gradually, as I grew older, I began to read everything in sight – road signs, the back of cereal boxes, instruction manuals... anything with words drew my interest. I bought an Enid Blyton book every week and borrowed other novels from the school library. I busted mysteries with the Five-Find Outers every night. I practiced charms at the Gryffindor common room and bought sugar quills from Honeydukes with Harry, Ron and Hermione. I drank frobscottle and caught dreams with Sophie and the BFG. I walked the streets of Narnia. Small parts of my heart were left in every book I've read before. The smell of books and the feel of flipping pages and making small dog-ears by the top margin are sensations that can never be replaced by anything else. As I grew even older, I interested myself in something other than reading – conversation. Conversation intrigued me. I love sarcasm. I love irony. I especially enjoy talking to my mother. We would quarrel intensely and come to regret hurtful things we say, but I feel that all the conversations we had only made me a better person. In retrospect, it's what she said that made me recognize the flaws I have. There was once when I felt unhappy about my expectations for myself. It was a low period that made me withdrawn and rejected, but my mother got me through that by having a good talk with me. It was as if she lifted me from struggling against the currents and placed me onto dry land with words alone.

I believe in the power of words, written or spoken. It can make me feel as forlorn as an only figure in the pouring rain, but can also make me feel as hopeful as the sky is a brilliant blue. It's words that break us, but it's also words that bind us.